

**HAMPTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SELECTMEN'S MEETING ROOM
SEPTEMBER 18, 2006 – 7:00 PM**

PRESENT: Virginia Bridle-Russell, Chairman
Ben Moore, Vice-Chairman
James Workman
Rick Griffin
Bill Lally
Mark Gearreald, Interim Town Manager
Maureen Duffy, Administrative Assistant

REGRETS:

Chairman Virginia Bridle-Russell called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and introduced those in attendance.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

I. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Mr. Moore announced, Hampton Downtown Night Out this Thursday, September 21 from 4 to 8pm. The merchants in the downtown area will be open to attract business.

Chairman Bridle-Russell announced that on Sunday, October 1 there will be a Funky Divas of Gospel concert and brunch at the Victoria Inn 10:30 am – 1pm . All proceeds benefit the Village Preschool.

II. APPOINTMENTS

None

III. MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 11, 2006

The minutes of September 11, 2006 stand as read

IV. OLD BUSINESS

1. INTERIM TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Interim Town Manager Mr. Gearreald, Town Planner Jamie Steffen, and Selectman Rick Griffin, spoke at the State Park Department's public forum that was held at the Ashworth Hotel on Wednesday, September 13, 2006.

The forum was very well attended, and it will be very important to support the Department's quest for \$10 million in funding for upgrades to the State's facilities at Hampton Beach. Mr. Gearreald promised to provide DRED Commissioner Bald with a copy of the DVD presentation developed at the Vision Workshops held in early 2005, where a number of visions for use of the state park site were depicted.

Town Planner Steffen attended the Department of Transportation's (DOT) public forum on Thursday, September 14, on the Hampton Harbor Bridge. Two, near term options were presented for rehabbing the existing bridge rather than replacing it: a full rehab costing \$8 million, and a "minimal" rehab costing \$5 million. Advertising for bids will likely occur in the fall of 2007, with a projected spring 2008 construction startup.

The Planning Board is scheduling a public forum for its meeting on Wednesday, October 18, to discuss growth in Hampton. Mr. Gearreald anticipates that we will compile statistics on numbers of new residential units from the Building Department's and Tax Assessor's records, and on the number of new units planned and approved by the Planning Board, for which no building permits have yet been pulled.

Regarding the Winnacunnet Road/Park Avenue intersection, Mr. Gearreald spoke with the School District's attorney to bring him up to date on the further work to be done; Mr. Gearreald asked him to continue to hold the \$50,000.00 bond securing the restoration work until the additional changes needed are satisfactorily completed.

Mr. Gearreald signed the contract with Fay, Spofford & Thorndike to have them proceed with designing and bidding out the work on the West Side streets.

The minutes of the non-public session of this Board last week with the Local Government Center on the Town Manager search have been generated. Mr. Gearreald suggested that a Motion should be made to seal those minutes under RSA 91-A:3, III as divulgence of the information could jeopardize the effectiveness of the search.

The New Hampshire Supreme Court oral argument in the case of Tide Mill Road LLC v. Town of Hampton is scheduled for Thursday, September 21 at 9:30 a.m.

A hearing is scheduled for Wednesday, September 20 at the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) regarding the petition by Macquarie Bank to acquire the stock of Aquarion Water Company of New Hampshire. The PUC staff and Macquarie have agreed to a Settlement Agreement calling for PUC approval of the proposed acquisition upon certain conditions. This agreement will be presented at the upcoming hearing. Mr. Gearreald recommends that like the Office of Consumer Advocate, we take no position on this acquisition, one way or the other. The bigger issue involved the requested rate increase that was concluded before Macquarie's petition was filed. The Town of North Hampton will be opposing this acquisition as it pursues the separate strategy of seeking to acquire Aquarion for itself. Hampton voters have previously rejected exploring that idea.

Selectmen's budget review sessions, for Police and Fire have been reversed, so that Fire is scheduled for October 2 and Police is scheduled for October 9. This will also mean that the subject of the Beach Fire station committee reports will now be taken up at your meeting on October 2 when the Fire Chief will be present. Mr. Gearreald will notify John Kane of this change so that the Beach Precinct Commissioners will have the correct night.

Fire Chief Lipe has contacted Unitil about raising the banner for the September 20, "Fundraiser for Brooke" which the Board had approved subject to resolving Unitil's concerns. Unitil has just fixed the problem in question relating to one of its wires, and Unitil itself has now put up the banner. Unitil will take down the banner after the event.

Mr. Gearreald will need to meet with the Board after this meeting in a non-meeting to discuss a legal issue.

BOARD'S RESPONSE TO THE MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Lally commented on the public forum held at the Ashworth on September 13th to discuss the proposed upgrades to the State's facilities at Hampton Beach. He felt it was a positive meeting and it was well attended.

Mr. Moore suggested, asking the presenter, of the State's facilities at Hampton Beach, Mr. Scott to put his requested tasks for the Selectmen on paper.

Mr. Griffin attended the public forum regarding the State Beach upgrades and the DOT meeting. He commented on the large number of local residents and government officials in attendance.

Mr. Workman suggested consulting with the Beach Precinct when providing input to the State about the Hampton Beach upgrades.

Mr. Workman asked the Interim Town Manager to investigate whether or not the property at the rear of the current fire station was deeded to the Precinct Commission for the purpose of building a station.

Mr. Lally MOTIONED to seal the September 11, 2006 minutes from the non-public session with the Local Government Center on the Town Manager search under RSA 91-A:3, III. **Mr. Workman SECONDED.**

**VOTE: 4 FOR
1 OPPOSED (Moore)**

2 – EOC – NIMS RESOLUTION

The topic will be discussed when the Fire Chief is available to explain the resolution in detail during the October 2, Board of Selectmen's meeting.

OTHER OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Moore inquired about the Kings Highway construction status. At this time there has been no action to report.

Mr. Moore asked for the Interim Town Manger to provide the Board with the PO value issued to Fay, Spofford & Thorndike

V. NEW BUSINESS

1 – 2007 BUDGET REVIEW – GENERAL GOVERNMENT – INCLUDING CULTURAL & RECREATION, BUILDING INSPECTION

Mr. Gearreald reminded the Board and personnel of the workshop meeting held on July 17, 2006. At this meeting between the Board and Department Directors the needs of each department were expressed. The Board requested that each Department Head present a needs based budget. He also noted that the Directors worked with Town Manager James Barrington, the Finance Director Mike Schwotzer, and Mr. Gearreald to develop the proposed budget.

Mr. Workman expressed his disappointment that the Board did not have the budget in hand before tonight's meeting. For that reason he will abstain from voting on any budget items at this time.

Executive

The Selectmen's Annual Stipend is \$3,500 for a total of \$17,500. The stipend amount has never gone to a Town vote. The Selectmen are very dedicated to their job and the dollar figure is a very reasonable amount for their services.

Mr. Workman noted that the Trustees of the Trust Funds, Administrator received a 25% increase in pay for 2007 and it appears that it has increased almost every year in the past.

Town Clerk – Election, Registration & Vital Statistics

Town Clerk Arleen Andreozzi and Deputy Town Clerk Jane Cypher came before the Board to present their budget. The Clerk's budget is similar to last year's, with a slight increase in wages. There was a change in computer support in the budget for \$6,100. Maintenance of computer and other equipment maintenance should be \$4,300 rather than \$6,800. Mrs. Andreozzi has included a new copier in her budget as the current one lacks the capabilities required by the office. The computer support for \$5,900 includes the interware for vehicle registration and election information.

Voter Registration & Election Administration

Robert Casassa presented the budget for the voter registration for 2007. The budget is down as there are fewer events in 2007 in comparison to 2006.

Financial Administration – Accounting & Financial

The Finance budget is down from the 2006 year. Implementing GASB 34 has been included to address the issue of unfavorable audit reports which may negatively impact on bond rates for the Town. The biggest obstacle that Finance Director Mike Schwotzer foresees in the implementation process as an accurate inventory of all Town property (i.e. roads, bridges and buildings) must be accounted for.

Assessing

The Town Assessor Bob Estey presented the department's 2007 budget. The most significant increase in the budget is the Data Collector position costing \$24,102. Mapping expenses have increased to include revisions and upgrades and an extra \$1,000 has been added to Supplies & Expenses in anticipated Data Collector costs.

Mr. Moore questioned if the Data Collector job should be outsourced or an in-house paid position and that it would depend on the results of the Town vote.

Mr. Workman suggested the use of an existing Town vehicle for the proposed Data Collector to use for work purposes.

Tax Collection

Tax Collector Joyce Sheehan presented her Department's budget. Mrs. Sheehan expressed her concern about a late tax rate setting as it ultimately costs more because of borrowed funds. The wages for the Collector and her staff have increased to be more comparable with other towns of similar populations. Mrs. Sheehan has written a letter to the Union Steward regarding the increase in wage.

The tax office also is in need of a new printer, print/fax/scan/copy machine and cash register.

Management Information Systems (MIS)

The Network Systems Engineer Paul Paquette presented his budget for the upcoming year. He noted that there are a number of computers and monitors that will need to be replaced as well as the Vision Server in 2007. In addition the fiber optic cable connection between the Town Hall and Fire Station #2 has been budgeted for.

Mr. Lally suggested that there may be some Homeland Security grants available for the department to improve communications.

Mr. Workman asked if Mr. Paquette had investigated the idea of leasing computers. Mr. Paquette said that in most lease situations the leaser ends up paying more than they would for a new computer.

The nature of Mr. Paquette's job often requires him to work evenings, weekends and on call. To alleviate some of the burden, backup network support has been included in the budget.

Legal

Attorney and Interim Town Manager Mark Gearreald explained that the increase wages includes the 2% that was given by Mr. Barrington. Currently Mr. Gearreald's wages are being charged to the Town Manager position rather than the regular attorney's wage. The legal budget includes the cost of outside council and collective bargaining/labor costs which depends on the number of grievances

Planning Board

Town Planner Jamie Steffen addressed the Board. There is a definite need for a Conservation Coordinator position to be added to the Planning Department. This position would reduce the workload for Conservation Commission volunteers. The Planner is dealing with a high volume of applications and a large number of these applications require special permits (often wetland permits) which requires the monitoring. Currently the Planning Board is heavily relying on volunteers from the Conservation Commission to do the work. The Chairman of the Conservation Commission, Ellen Goethel has written a letter in support of the position. The Planning office lacks manpower and there is little time to do long range planning which in turn harms the community. An additional staff member would free up some time and would help the current staff and

community in the long run. Currently the Planning Board has little time to monitor and enforce, leaving the job up to the developer to abide by the regulations and conditions.

The proposed Conservation Coordinator position would be part-time and they would be involved in site walks, monitoring and coordination of state wetland applications. The Coordinator could also assist in the building department and planning office.

Conservation Commission

Conservation Commission volunteers are often subjected to angry phone calls from developers and little administrative support. The Chairman of the Commission Ellen Goethel has a very busy work life in addition to her volunteer services with the Town. Mr. Gearreald noted that there is only so much that the Town should ask volunteers to do.

Ellen Goethel addressed the Board. She realizes that the position is an expense that no one wants to look at. The Coordinator could address violations and be the main person to call and get answers from. Currently the Commission has an answering machine to take incoming calls. Ellen Goethel checks on the messages and responds to calls once a week (sometimes every second week) but feels that it is not enough.

There are many projects presented to the Planning Board that with wetland issues that need to be addressed. The Commission is in charge of open spaces and preserving the local environment. Ellen Goethel spends an incredible number of hours working on these issues and she asked the Board to seriously consider this position. She also suggested that there may be a fee charged for special permits which may defray some of the costs of the position.

There was some discussion on who is responsible for setting permit fees. Mr. Steffen believes that it is the Planning Board and it may be time to review the fees so that the Department could potentially be financially self sufficient.

Ellen Goethel noted that the Commission has a few monetary fee increases in their budget.

Mr. Steffen also noted that he has increased the budget for staff development as he feels that he and the community would benefit from him partaking in conferences and training seminars.

Town Office Building

Mr. Gearreald is concerned about the safety of all the employees. The Town Hall has minimum security and everyday employees are exposed to people who want what they want now, and are upset, frustrated and often stressed. We live in a less cordial society and public employees are exposed to shootings. Recent events in the Town Hall have increased Mr. Gearreald's concerns with security and employee safety.

Mr. Paquette had priced out various security options such as cameras and panic buttons. The cameras could track criminal activity around the clock. Police and fire have been consulted and there are a few things that can be done in-house.

The general consensus of the Board was for Mr. Paquette to seek various prices and options for a security system. In addition the Board felt that the request should be a warrant article.

Cemeteries

Mr. Moore questioned what happens if the Cemetery over spends their budget. It was suggested that perhaps the Cemetery Trustees could come before the Board or write a memo explaining what happens if they over spend.

Other General Government - Parking

Recreation and Parks Director Dyana Martin discussed the Parking Administration budget. She has accounted for additional staff wages (additional \$9,000) during the Seafood Festival.

Recreation & Parks

There is a decrease in seasonal part-time wages because some students are graduating and moving on, leaving employment opportunities for new employees. Starting salaries are lower than the experienced seasonal workers. Mrs. Martin also accounted for an increase in water, gas and electricity

The Recreation and Parks Director is considering a warrant article for tennis court improvements and repairing the Island Path parking lot.

Mrs. Martin also explained that a year around Parks Caretaker is required in the winter time because that is when planning starts for the summer season and maintenance planning.

The summer camps were very popular this year. All were full except for the teen camp.

Library

Library Director Catherine Redden came before the Board to discuss the Library's budgeting plans. There have been some transitions in personnel at the Library, it is now fully staffed. The Library Trustees have implemented a five year pay scale increase to address the problem of low pay for staff. Repair and utility increases have also been made.

Building & Code Inspection

Building Inspector Kevin Schultz presented the Building Department's budget. It has increase by 10% in comparison to last year. The majority of the expense is in wages and the new part-time inspector. Mr. Schultz would like to restructure his department that would involve promoting the Assistant Building Inspector to Deputy Building Inspector / Deputy Health Officer (with an adjusted salary). The Department Head believes that this change to the organizational structure would distribute the workload. There is also an increase in staff development and gasoline costs.

Mr. Moore inquired if the fees in the Department are competitive with other communities. Mr. Schultz said that it is time that the fees were revamped as it has been many years since they have been adjusted.

Welfare

There are a few minor increases to the Welfare Department. Increase in the Welfare Officer's wage and an increase in gasoline.

Mr. Workmen asked if the number of copiers and number of people using them be available at the next Board meeting.

The consensus of the Selectmen was to generate a Board sponsored warrant article that includes all the Health and Human Service Agencies that received funding last year. The article will include the same dollar figure as supported last year. An article will be developed in December.

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

1 – Block Party Request

2 – Parade License

Mr. Moore MOTIONED to approve the Parade License for Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal Pro-life Committee. **Mr. Griffin SECONDED.**

VOTE: 4 FOR
Abstained - Workman

Mr. Moore MOTIONED to approve Wally's Pub Block Party Request, on October 8, 2006 subject to the conditions of the Police Department. **Mr. Workman SECONDED.**

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

VII. - PUBLIC COMMENTS

Maurice Friedman thanked the Board for appointing him to the Rockingham Planning Commission.

Mr. Friedman discussed that the Town Manager's job is to make the Board of Selectmen's job easier. He believes that the Board must seek a Manager with strong leadership skills. Mr. Friedman is hopeful that the Manager hired will consider efficiencies for the Town.

Cemetery Director Danny Kenney came to explain his Department's financial position. He explained that Town cemeteries are maintained on a bare bones budget and any unforeseen expense caused by an Act of God causes a financial burden. It was noted that some expenses may be covered by insurance.

VIII. - CLOSING COMMENTS:

Mr. Moore MOTIONED to have a non-meeting following the public meeting. **Mr. Workman SECONDED.**

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Moore MOTIONED to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 PM. **Mr. Workman SECONDED.**

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

Chairman